



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
LANSING

GLORIA J. JEFF  
DIRECTOR

September 8, 2004

The Honorable Shirley M. Johnson, Chair  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation  
Michigan State Senate  
P. O. Box 30036  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

The Honorable Judson Gilbert II, Chair  
Senate Transportation Committee  
Michigan State Senate  
P.O. Box 30036  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

The Honorable Scott A. Shackleton, Chair  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Transportation  
Michigan House of Representatives  
P. O. Box 30014  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

The Honorable Gene DeRossett, Chair  
House Transportation Committee  
Michigan House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 30014  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

Dear Senator Johnson, Senator Gilbert, Representative Shackleton, and Representative DeRossett:

Enclosed is the report which addresses the requirement of Section 352 of Public Act 561 of 2002, the fiscal year 2003 Appropriations Bill for the Michigan Department of Transportation, as signed into law by Governor Jennifer M. Granholm on September 30, 2002.

Sec. 352 requires for fiscal 2003:

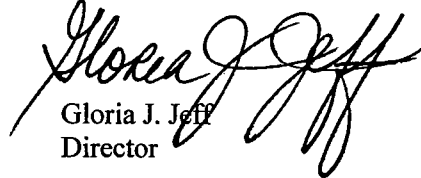
*"(1) Each county road commission, or in the case of a charter county with a population of 2,000,000 or more with an elected county executive that does not have a board of county road commissioners, the county executive, shall prepare, and present to the department, a map illustrating the all-season county road network under its jurisdiction. The county road commissions shall record this information on an official county highway map provided to them by the department. The department shall provide each county road commission with 3 official copies of their county road highway map on or before October 1, 2003."*

*"(2) After compiling this information for all Michigan counties, the department shall prepare a report on the current all-season road network within the state. This report shall illustrate the current all-season road network under state and county control, identify contiguity gaps in this network, and suggest ways to improve connectivity on the current all-season network. This report shall be presented to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on transportation, the house and senate transportation policy committees, and the house and senate fiscal agencies on or before October 1, 2004."*

Page 2  
September 8, 2004

The report is submitted to you in fulfillment of this requirement. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either me or Susan P. Mortel, Director, Bureau of Transportation Planning, at 517-373-0343.

Sincerely,



Gloria J. Jeff  
Director

Enclosure(s)

cc: William Hamilton, House Fiscal Agency  
Craig Thiel, Senate Fiscal Agency

**MICHIGAN  
ALL-SEASON ROAD NETWORK**

**SECTION 352 REPORT**

**TO**

**SENATE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE  
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS SUBCOMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
HOUSE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE**

**Prepared by**

**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

**September 2004**

**Submitted by**

**Gloria J. Jeff, Director  
Michigan Department of Transportation**

---

## Introduction

This report is filed in response to Sec. 352, PA 561 of 2002, otherwise known as the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Appropriations bill (Enrolled House Bill No. 5651).

Sec. 352:

*“(1) Each county road commission, or in the case of a charter county with a population of 2,000,000 or more with an elected county executive that does not have a board of county road commissioners, the county executive, shall prepare, and present to the department, a map illustrating the all-season county road network under its jurisdiction. The county road commissions shall record this information on an official county highway map provided to them by the department. The department shall provide each county road commission with 3 official copies of their county road highway map on or before October 1, 2003.*

*“(2) After compiling this information for all Michigan counties, the department shall prepare a report on the current all-season road network within the state. This report shall illustrate the current all-season road network under state and county control, identify contiguity gaps in this network, and suggest ways to improve connectivity on the current all-season network. This report shall be presented to the house and senate appropriations subcommittees on transportation, the house and senate transportation policy committees, and the house and senate fiscal agencies on or before October 1, 2004.”*

MDOT and the county road commissions have worked cooperatively to identify a connected and continuous all-season road network since 1987 when the Transportation Economic Development Fund (TEDF) was created by Public Act 231. TEDF Categories D and F are directed at improving eligible county roads and city streets to the all-season standard such that “routes must begin and end at an existing all-season road or highway or a point-of-loading origin.” (source: TEDF Guidelines for Category D).

Progress has been made over the past 17 years to achieve the goal of the TEDF for Categories D and F, that is, “to serve development by establishing and integrating a local secondary all-season road system with the state trunkline system” (source: TEDF Guidelines for Category D). Fulfilling the requirements of Section 352 provides an additional step toward reaching this goal. Most of the 83 county road commissions have complied with the requirement to provide all-season county road information to MDOT. MDOT has, in turn, compiled this information with existing map data developed in connection with TEDF, Category D, and in fulfilling Section 509 of PA 136 of 1999 (a prior requirement very similar to Section 352).

The map attached as page 6 of this report illustrates the county and city (non-trunkline) portion of the current all-season road network, as well as the all-season portion of the state trunkline system, based on information compiled to date.

In addition, the map shows those routes which are proposed to become all-season by the counties. Finally, contiguity gaps as identified by MDOT are also shown.

The following table of mileage by all-season and proposed all-season category has been derived from the network as illustrated on the map.

<i>Mileage Table: Non-trunkline All-season Routes</i>	
<b>All-season Category</b>	<b>Mileage</b>
Completed all-season	7,700
All-season proposed by counties	2,177
All-season contiguity gaps identified by MDOT	516
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,393</b>

The map illustrates that while contiguity gaps exist in the total statewide all-season network, there are many instances of all-season systems which are complete within individual regions of the state. Suggested strategies toward completing the goal of a statewide, all jurisdiction (state, county, city), integrated, connected all-season network are provided in the **Recommendations** section of this report, below.

## **Background**

A road is considered all-season if it is constructed to a standard that allows it to carry legal loads year-round. If a road is not constructed to the all-season standard, it is considered "seasonal." During the spring thaw, "seasonal" roads must be posted with signs warning of seasonal load limitations or weight restrictions. In Michigan, as in other "frost-belt" states, the freeze/thaw cycle causes a seasonal instability in the ground which surrounds and supports roads. Essentially, an all-season road is distinguished from a "seasonal" road by having a thicker base. This thicker base allows the all-season road to absorb heavy loads (up to legal limits) without significant damage, even when the ground is unstable. If these same heavy loads were permitted on "seasonal" roads during spring thaws, damage could result. Posting of seasonal load limitations or weight restrictions on "seasonal" roads is intended to prevent damage and to extend pavement life.

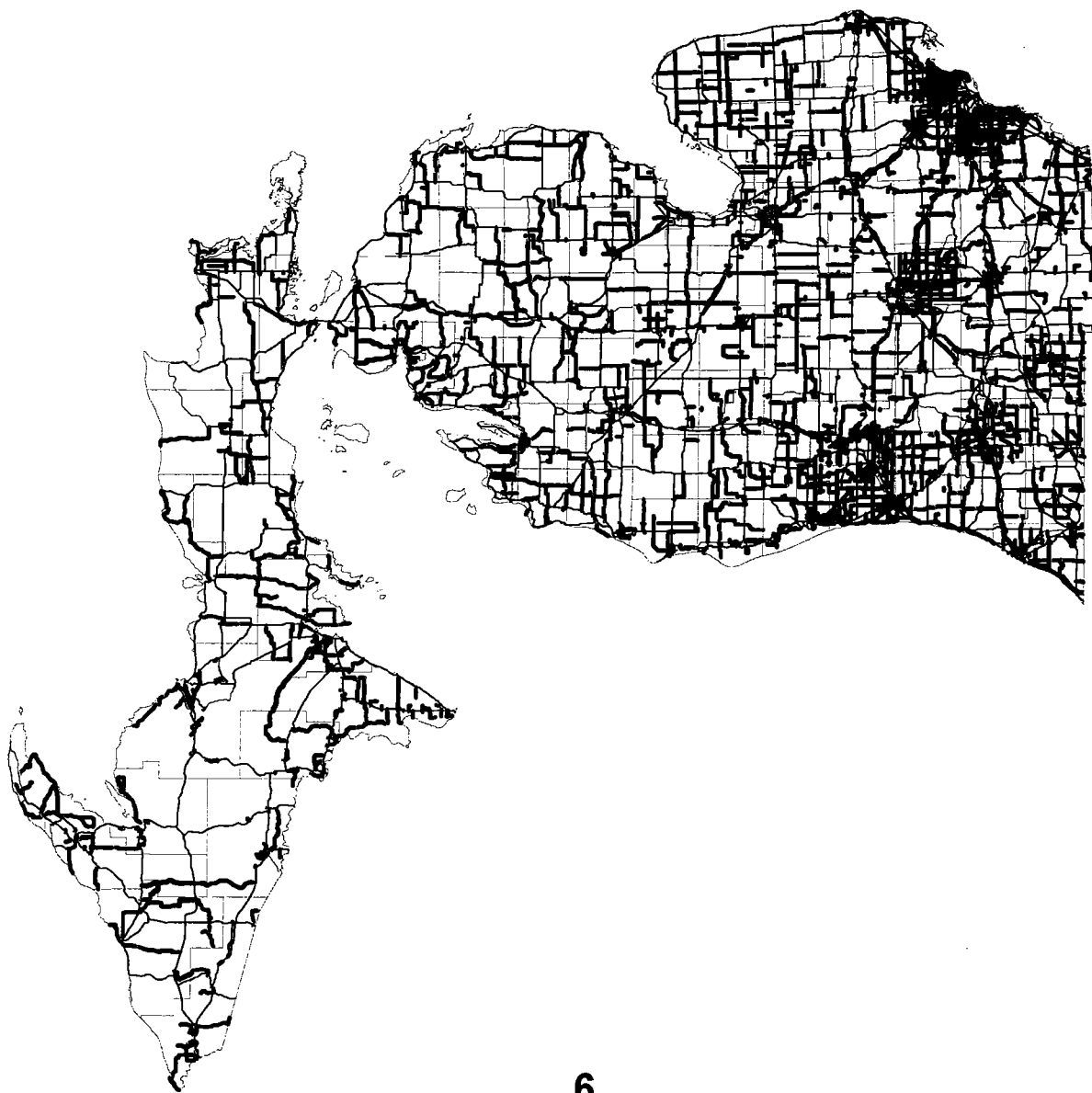
Commercial trucking, logging, and heavy agricultural vehicles require a continuous and connected system of all-season roads, between point of loading (or unloading) origin and ultimate destination. Statewide and regional economies are adversely affected by a road system which requires truckers to drive many extra miles so as to avoid "seasonal" roads during the spring thaw each year. On the other hand, the needs of the commercial trucking industry can be met by an all-season road network which is a sub-system of all public roads. In other words, there is no need for every highway, road, and street to be built to the all-season standard.

- Based on the information in the mileage table (page 2) above and a statewide average of \$500,000 to improve a mile of rural roadway to the all-season standard, the total cost of improving every proposed all-season route may be estimated as follows:

All-season proposed by counties:	2,177 miles x \$500,000 =	\$1,088,500,000
All-season contiguity gaps:	516 miles x \$500,000 =	<u>258,000,000</u>
	Total	\$1,346,500,000

At current TEDF, Category D program levels, it would take approximately 68 years to construct all these miles to the all-season standard.

In order to bring about effective network-improvement results more quickly, it is recommended that an all-season network prioritization strategy be developed. MDOT-Planning, the Transportation Economic Development and Enhancement Office, the County Road Association of Michigan, and the Michigan Municipal League should be involved in developing the prioritization strategy.

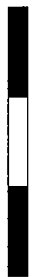


## All Season Roads

### Legend

- Trunkline - Seasonal
- Trunkline - All-Season
- County & City
- All-Season
- Proposed All-Season
- MDOT's Contiguity Gaps

0 30 60 90



Miles